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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/826,032 | 04/03/2001 | Richard A. Steenblik | 40669/201349 | 3794 |

23370 7590 05/28/2002

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 EXAMINER

NGUYEN, THONG Q

 ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2872

[Signature]

DATE MAILED: 05/28/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) |
| | 09/826,032 | STEENBLIK ET AL. |
| | Examiner Thong Q. Nguyen | Art Unit 2872 |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____ .

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-77 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) ____ is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) 1-77 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____ .

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____ .

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____ . 6) Other: ____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-55, drawn to a microscope having aperture optimized lens, classified in class 359, subclass 368+.
 - II. Claims 56-75, drawn to method and/or process for providing/optimizing the aperture of a lens, classified in class 359, subclass 642+.
 - III. Claims 76-77, drawn a method for optimizing diffractive surface of a lens, classified in class 359, subclass 558+
2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

First, inventions (II-III) and I are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case the method and/or the process as claimed can be used to make other optical elements such as a mirror or a prism, and the lens used in the microscope as claimed in the invention I can be made by hand.

Second, inventions II and III are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions II and III are directed to different methods for solving different functions by different operations. In particular, the

invention II directs to provide/optimize the aperture of a lens while the invention III directs to a method for optimizing diffractive surface of a lens with the limitations relating to tooling limits.

3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. **If the invention I is elected then the following restriction on the basis of subcombinations useable together is applied:**

I-A. Claims 5, 14-18, 42-46 and 48, drawn to a structure having a top/upper portion supporting a lens and a bottom/lower portion supporting an object wherein a locking mechanism is used to removably lock the portions, classified in class 359, subclass 368.

I-B. Claims 6-13, drawn to a positionable slide holder, classified in class 359, subclass 391.

I-C. Claims 29-38, drawn to a focusing mechanism, classified in class 359, subclass 383.

5. Claim 1 links inventions I-A, I-B and I-C. The restriction requirement among the linked inventions is subject to the nonallowance of the linking claim(s), claim 1. Upon the allowance of the linking claim(s), the restriction requirement as to the linked inventions shall be withdrawn and any claim(s) depending from or otherwise including all the limitations of the allowable linking claim(s) will be entitled to examination in the

instant application. Applicant(s) are advised that if any such claim(s) depending from or including all the limitations of the allowable linking claim(s) is/are presented in a continuation or divisional application, the claims of the continuation or divisional application may be subject to provisional statutory and/or nonstatutory double patenting rejections over the claims of the instant application. Where a restriction requirement is withdrawn, the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 121 are no longer applicable. *In re Ziegler*, 44 F.2d 1211, 1215, 170 USPQ 129, 131-32 (CCPA 1971). See also MPEP § 804.01.

6. Claims 2-4, 19-28, 39-41, 47 and 49-55 recite features which are not related to the subject matters which are used to issue the restriction as set forth in element 3) above; therefore, these claims will be examined this the linking claim and the claims of the elected invention I-A or I-B or I-C.

7. Inventions I-A, I-B and I-C are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, each of the inventions I-A, I-B and I-C has separate utility to be used in an optical device without the features of other inventions. For instance, the invention I-A directs to the use of a structure for supporting a lens and an object which invention does not need the specific limitations concerning a positionable slide holder as recited in the invention I-B or the focusing mechanism as recited in the invention I-C. Similarly, the invention I-B does not need the specific limitations concerning the structure as recited in the invention I-A or the focus mechanism as recited in the invention I-C; and the invention I-C does not need the

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specific limitations concerning the structure as recited in the invention I-A or the positionable slide holder as recited in the invention I-B. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

8. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, and the search required for each inventions I-A, I-B and I-C are not overlapped together, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

9. **It is also noted that if one of the inventions I-A, I-B and I-C is elected then applicant must elect one of the species as follows:**

This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

Species (A) directs to the use of one and only one lens; and Species (B) directs to the use of a plurality of lenses

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, there is not any generic claim.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include

all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

10. If the invention II is elected then the following restriction on the basis of species is applied.

This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

Species (C) directs to a method/process for optimizing the aperture of a lens by using the geometric optics resolution limits of a lens and the diffractive resolution limits of the lens. This species is readable from claims 56-61 and 63-75. See Note below.

Species (D) directs to a method for providing an optimized lens aperture by using three ranges of an aperture in which each range is controlled by a set of conditions. This species is readable from claim 62.

Note: Claims 70-75 are grouped into the species (a) for the reason that the method for aperture optimizing the lens surface recited in claim 74/70 is identical to the method recited in claim 56.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, there is not any generic claim.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

11. A telephone call was made to Kristin D. Mallatt on 05/24/2002 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

10. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thong Q. Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 308-4814. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

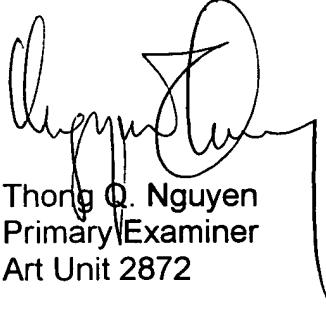
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Cassandra Spyrou can be reached on (703) 308-1687. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-7722 for regular communications and (703) 308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703 308 0956.

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Thong Q. Nguyen
Primary Examiner
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May 24, 2002